

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES NEW STATE RECORD FOR VISITORS FROM OVERSEAS *North Carolina Draws 358,000 Overseas Visitors In 2007 To Rank 15th In The United States*

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley announced today that North Carolina attracted more tourists from overseas in 2007 than in any previous year. The state drew nearly 358,000 overseas visitors in 2007 to rank 15th in the nation, according to a report released by the International Trade Administration and Office of Travel and Tourism Industries in the U.S. Department of Commerce.

“More and more people realize what a great state North Carolina is and are coming to see the many cultural, historic, natural and recreational treasures we offer,” Easley said. “The survey results also show the success that has come from the hard work our tourism offices are doing to promote the state as a travel destination.”

North Carolina is the third most popular Southeastern state in the analysis, which uses in-flight surveys given to international passengers flying into the United States (excluding Canada and Mexico) to determine the destinations of the visitors. North Carolina ranked 18th in 2005, the last time the rankings were issued.

The N.C. Department of Commerce’s Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development operates tourism marketing offices in Germany and the United Kingdom, as well as one in Canada. The offices do marketing, agent training, promotions and public relations to key tour operators selling the North Carolina and the South to visitors in German Speaking Europe (Germany, Austria and Switzerland) and the United Kingdom.

The state also conducts economic development and tourism missions to other countries. In April the governor, Commerce Secretary Jim Fain and other state officials visited Italy on an economic development mission that included meetings with business and tourism officials. Easley met with U.S. embassy officials in Rome and hosted an event for Italian tourism operators, travel writers and other tourism officials to promote North Carolina as a vacation destination.

Overseas visitors typically stay longer and spend significantly more than domestic visitors per trip. According to the U.S. Office of Travel and Tourism Industries, overseas visitors to North Carolina spend an average of \$2,568 per trip and stay in the state an average of 12 days compared with domestic visitors who typically spend \$549 per trip and stay in the state an average of 3.3 days.

The tourism industry overall contributes more than \$16.5 billion to the state’s economy and employs more than 190,000 workers. For more information about the travel survey or the tourism industry, call the North Carolina Department of Commerce’s Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development at 919-733-7420.

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